

Statistics in focus

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Authors

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POL MARQUERS

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Farm structure in France – 2005

81% of the agricultural land and 69% of the livestock
are in farms of 50 ha or more

This Statistics in Focus is part of a series of country-specific publications on the results of the Farm Structure Survey (FSS) 2005. It provides a brief but nevertheless comprehensive insight into the farm structure in France. A similar publication was issued in February 2005 presenting the results of the FSS 2003 in France.

In 2005 in France, about 527.4 thousand* agricultural holdings had an economic size of at least 1 European Size Unit (ESU).

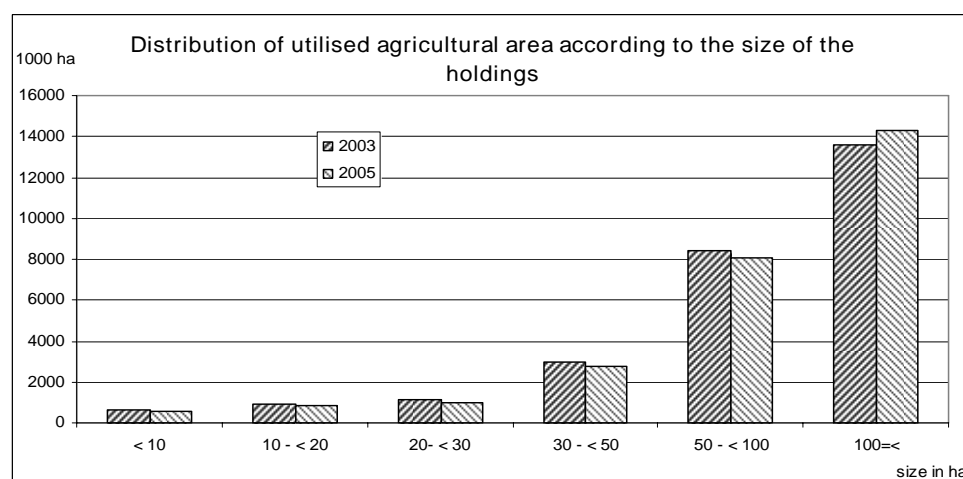
- These holdings employed 844.4 thousand AWUs (annual work units), the equivalent of 844.4 thousand persons working full time;
- they made use of about 27.5 million ha of agricultural area, which is on average 52.1 ha per holding (compared to 48.9 ha in 2003).

Among these 527.4 thousand agricultural holdings

- 31% made use of less than one AWU, while 29% made use of 2 or more AWUs;
- 21% used less than 5 ha agricultural area, while 16% used 100 ha or more;
- 18% were holdings of the type specialist cereals, oil seed and protein crops, 14% specialist vineyard, 12% specialist cattle rearing and fattening, 12% specialist dairy farming and 9% were other grazing livestock farms, including sheep;
- 44% of their agricultural area was situated in less favoured or mountain areas;
- 2% were organic farms;
- 22% benefited from direct investment aid.

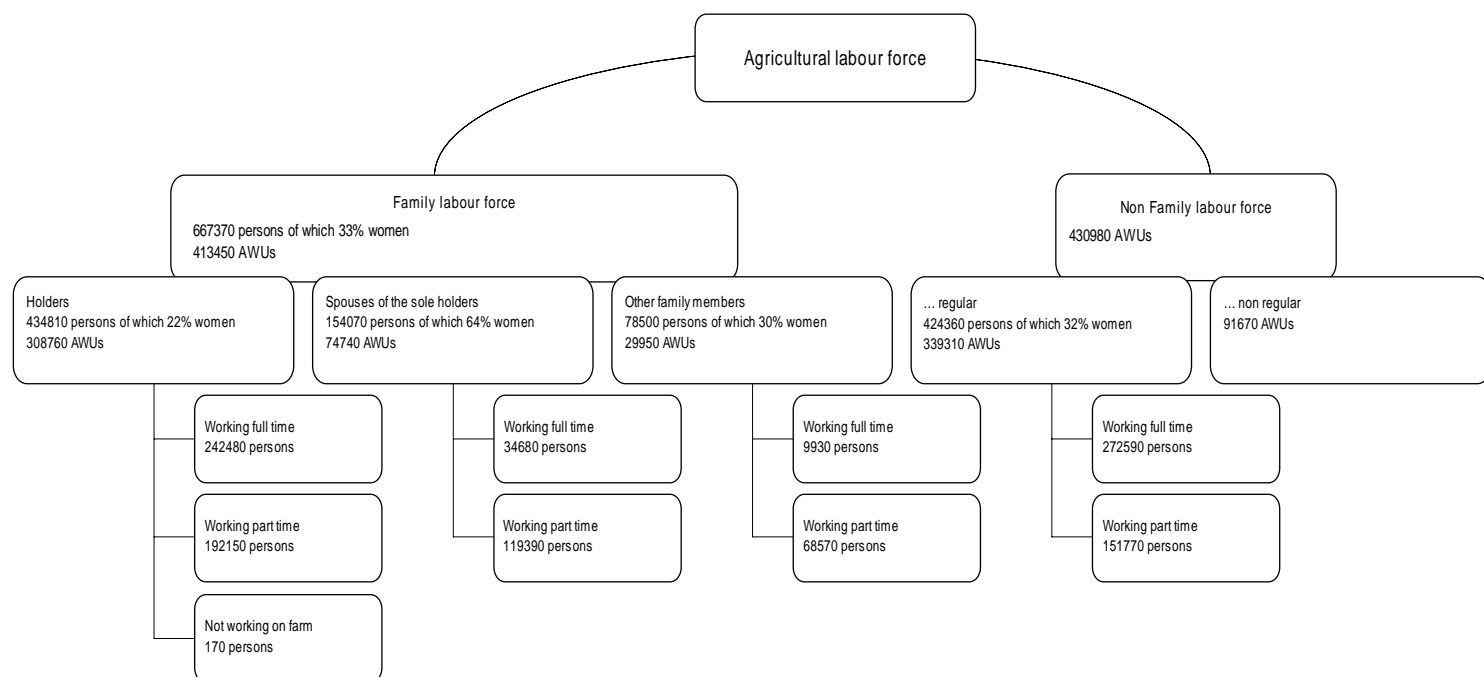
Among the 434.8 thousand sole holders

- 22% were women;
- 37% were aged 55 or more, and 10% were younger than 35 years;
- 18% had another gainful activity as their major occupation.

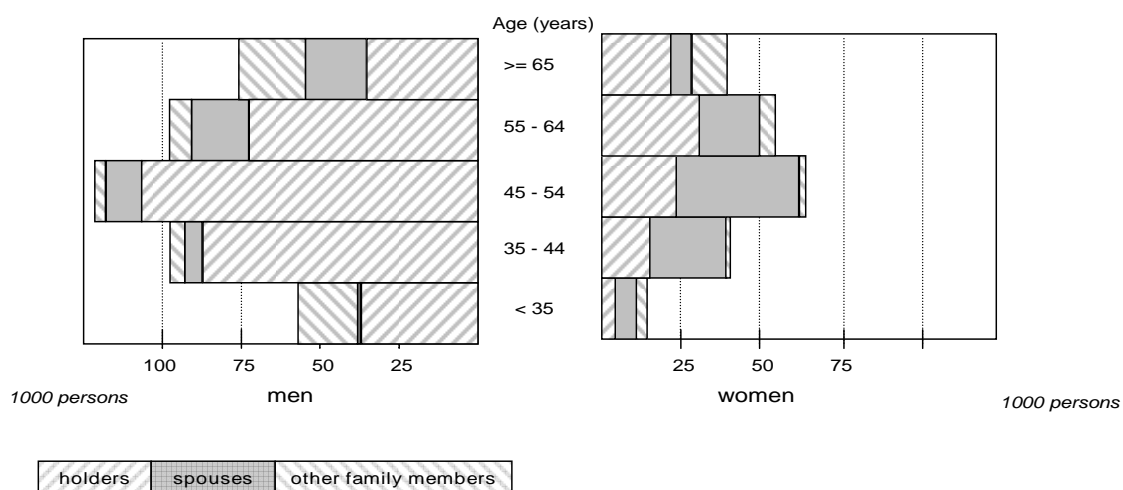


Due to differences in the threshold across Member States, the total number of farms is not comparable between countries. This is why the present analysis, including Tables 1-4 and the graphs focus on holdings of at least one ESU. See methodological notes for more information on the concept of the ESU.

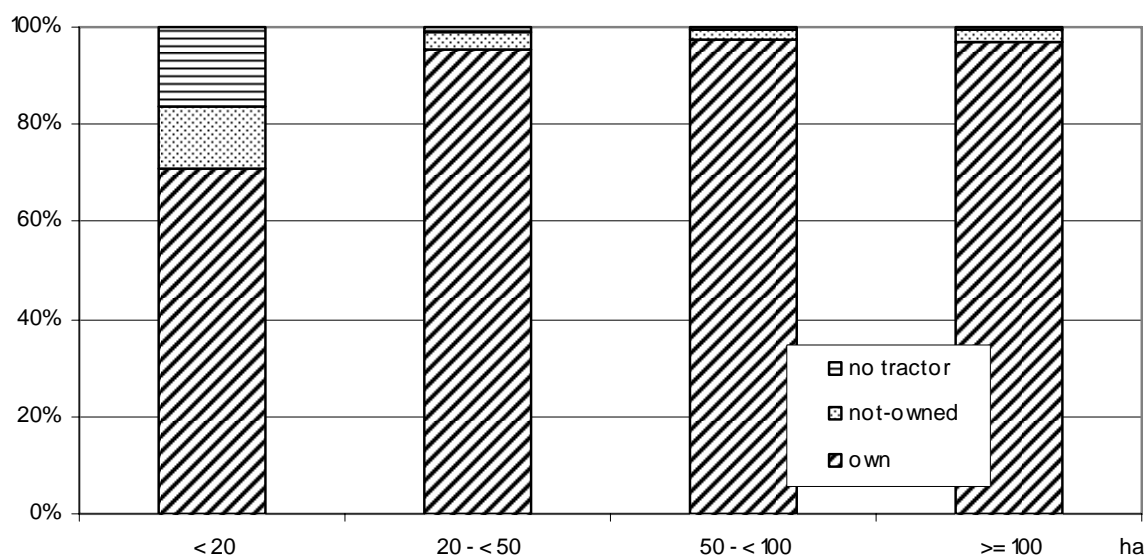
France 2005 – Holdings of at least 1 ESU



Family labour force



Tractor use by utilised agricultural area categories



Size of the farms	Agricultural area (ha)				All farms	Livestock (LU*)			
	< 20	20 - < 50	50 - < 100	100 =<		0	0 <- < 50	50 - < 100	100 =<
Total labour force									
1000 annual work units	232.6	184.2	212.2	215.5	844.4	337.9	213.8	135.9	156.8
Family labour force									
1000 persons	302.6	150.1	136.8	77.8	667.4	212.1	293.3	98.8	63.2
1000 annual work units	136.3	104.6	106.8	65.6	413.5	115.7	163.2	79.9	54.8
Non-family labour regularly employed									
1000 persons	84.6	71.4	109.0	159.3	424.4	188.3	54.6	65.0	116.5
1000 annual work units	67.6	56.5	86.6	128.6	339.3	153.4	39.2	51.2	95.5
Non regular non family labour force									
1000 annual work units	28.6	23.1	18.7	21.2	91.7	68.9	11.4	4.9	6.5
Holding managers (1000)	218.2	109.3	112.9	86.9	527.4	186.6	199.7	76.7	64.4
- women (%)	29.5	21.6	13.5	9.8	21.2	22.3	26.6	12.7	11.4
- part-time - under 50 % (%)	55.9	18.3	6.9	4.5	29.1	39.3	38.3	2.4	3.1
- 50 % and over(%)	13.0	11.9	8.5	8.0	11.0	11.8	14.2	5.5	5.2
- with a basic agricult. training only (%)	9.3	14.3	13.5	9.6	11.3	9.5	12.5	13.8	9.8
- with a full agricultural training (%)	22.9	48.9	66.2	75.3	46.2	42.7	31.7	67.3	75.8
Sole/main holders (1000)	201.9	92.0	84.8	56.1	434.8	146.0	184.2	59.7	44.9
- women (%)	30.2	22.2	12.2	7.8	22.1	23.9	27.1	11.9	9.1
- distribution by age (%)									
- under 35 years	6.0	8.4	13.5	17.8	9.5	8.5	6.3	14.6	19.4
- from 35 to 44 years	17.7	25.0	29.6	33.2	23.6	21.7	19.8	31.0	35.0
- from 45 to 54 years	26.0	34.6	33.6	31.2	30.0	29.1	29.1	34.3	30.8
- from 55 to 64 years	25.7	26.9	21.0	16.3	23.8	25.4	26.6	18.6	14.2
- 65 years and over	24.5	5.1	2.2	1.6	13.1	15.2	18.3	1.4	0.7
- part-time - under 50 % (%)	60.4	21.7	9.2	7.0	35.3	50.2	41.5	3.1	4.4
- 50 % and over(%)	14.0	14.1	11.3	12.4	13.3	15.1	15.4	7.0	7.4
- with another gainful activity ¹ (%)	33.6	22.3	13.6	15.4	25.9	32.0	28.0	8.0	10.3
- as main occupation	27.4	12.2	3.7	2.3	17.6	22.8	19.8	2.0	2.1
- as a subsidiary occupation	6.2	10.2	9.9	13.2	8.3	9.2	8.3	6.0	8.2
Spouse of sole holder working on the holding (1000)	71.2	37.0	32.2	13.7	154.1	47.6	70.1	24.1	12.3
- women (%)	52.8	63.2	80.9	86.8	64.2	63.0	55.4	81.0	85.9
- distribution by age (%)									
- under 35 years	4.5	6.4	7.5	8.6	5.9	5.8	4.8	8.4	8.1
- from 35 to 54 years	42.1	55.4	66.5	69.3	52.8	51.5	44.8	68.1	73.4
- 55 years and over	53.5	38.2	26.0	22.1	41.3	42.7	50.4	23.5	18.5
- part-time - under 50 % (%)	73.2	48.9	42.1	47.2	58.6	65.9	65.1	37.5	34.4
- 50 % and over(%)	14.0	23.7	22.5	22.9	18.9	16.7	18.1	23.7	22.6
- with another gainful activity (%)	29.0	32.0	26.7	30.4	29.4	30.1	30.4	27.0	25.6
Other members of the holder's family working on the holding (1000)	29.5	21.2	19.8	8.0	78.5	18.5	39.0	15.0	6.1
- women (%)	29.3	32.4	29.9	22.1	29.5	26.9	31.3	30.2	24.5
- part-time - under 50 % (%)	79.6	73.8	68.5	57.2	72.9	72.4	77.5	67.3	59.0
- 50 % and over(%)	11.9	13.4	17.5	18.8	14.4	13.8	13.1	17.4	17.1
- with another gainful activity (%)	30.3	20.8	20.6	23.4	24.6	28.9	25.4	17.8	23.1

Symbols : not available 0 less than half of the unit or nil

* LU = Livestock Unit

¹ Refers only to holders who are also farm managers.

Size of the farms	Agricultural area (ha)				All farms	Livestock (LU)			
	< 20	20 - < 50	50 - < 100	100 = <		0	0 < - < 50	50 - < 100	100 = <
Holdings									
- total number (1000)	218.2	109.3	112.9	86.9	527.4	186.6	199.7	76.7	64.4
- by legal personality of the holder (%)									
- sole holder	91.3	80.4	63.6	35.0	73.8	74.4	89.9	63.5	34.7
- legal person	7.5	15.9	24.9	35.4	17.6	21.7	7.8	22.2	30.3
- group holders	1.2	3.8	11.6	29.6	8.6	3.9	2.3	14.4	35.0
- by employed labour force (%)									
- under 1 AWU	59.7	20.3	8.2	3.4	31.2	40.8	42.7	2.4	2.2
- from 1 to less than 2 AWU	26.3	52.3	53.1	38.0	39.4	32.7	43.1	53.8	29.8
- from 2 to less than 3 AWU	7.8	18.4	28.9	34.5	18.9	12.7	11.2	35.6	41.1
- 3 AWU and over	6.1	9.0	9.8	24.0	10.5	13.7	3.0	8.1	26.9
- by economic size (%)									
- from 1 to less than 8 ESU	55.3	6.6	0.7	0.2	24.4	24.7	41.4	0.1	0.0
- from 8 to less than 16 ESU	15.4	16.2	2.1	0.6	10.3	10.9	16.3	1.6	0.3
- from 16 to less than 40 ESU	14.5	41.7	26.1	4.6	21.0	18.4	24.3	32.4	5.1
- from 40 to less than 100 ESU	9.4	26.2	59.4	42.9	29.1	25.4	14.2	56.9	53.1
- 100 ESU and over	5.4	9.2	11.7	51.6	15.1	20.6	3.8	9.0	41.6
- by farm type (%)									
- specialist cereals, oil seed and protein crops	11.8	15.9	18.2	33.2	17.6	29.6	16.7	3.8	1.9
- specialist vineyard	25.5	12.1	3.4	1.0	14.0	35.2	3.9	0.2	0.1
- specialist cattle – rearing and fattening	9.3	14.0	15.2	12.9	12.1	0.0	17.2	22.0	19.9
- specialist dairy farming	1.9	18.7	24.3	10.1	11.5	0.0	10.3	36.1	19.8
- sheep, goats and other grazing livestock	10.5	9.8	6.4	5.1	8.6	1.3	17.2	7.9	3.9
- other types of farming	40.8	29.5	32.5	37.6	36.2	33.9	34.7	30.0	54.4
- by farming methods (%)									
- organic farming	1.2	2.1	2.2	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.8	2.4	1.3
- irrigating	16.6	16.9	16.7	21.0	17.4	26.9	13.2	10.4	11.6
- with fixed irrigation equipment	11.0	8.5	6.3	7.4	8.9	16.4	5.7	3.3	3.7
- with crops under glass	5.7	1.6	0.7	0.4	2.9	6.5	1.5	0.3	0.2
- benefiting of direct investment aids	5.9	20.0	36.0	45.0	21.7	13.3	13.1	42.0	48.5
- using a tractor (%)	83.6	99.1	99.6	99.4	92.9	88.8	92.5	99.0	98.5
- with their own tractor	70.7	95.6	97.2	97.0	85.9	77.0	86.2	97.9	96.3
- using a combine harvester (%)	24.6	67.3	84.3	91.3	57.2	44.8	52.0	78.7	83.6
- with another gainful activity than agricultural production (%)	29.8	23.9	21.2	24.5	25.8	32.8	25.0	18.0	17.7
- tourism	3.1	4.2	3.0	2.7	3.3	3.2	3.9	2.6	2.3
- handicraft	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.1
- processing of farm products	11.1	10.9	7.9	5.9	9.5	15.4	7.1	5.8	4.6
- wood processing	0.5	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.8	0.4	1.1	1.1	0.7
- aquaculture	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
- renewable energy production	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
- contractual work	1.6	3.1	5.3	11.6	4.4	5.4	3.1	4.4	5.3
- other gainful activities n.a.e.	25.3	16.3	12.5	11.6	18.4	23.9	18.6	11.1	10.8

Symbols : not available

0 less than half of the unit or nil

Size of the farm	Agricultural area (ha)				All farms	Livestock (LU)			
	< 20	20 - < 50	50 - < 100	100 = <		0	0 < - < 50	50 - < 100	100 = <
Area (1000 ha)									
Total area of agricultural holdings	1763.3	4094.0	8497.4	14684.3	29039.0	7904.5	7104.2	6435.4	7595.0
Other area	360.3	370.5	404.2	413.6	1548.6	480.4	591.6	260.9	215.8
Wooded area	244.2	247.7	265.0	244.8	1001.7	286.1	433.8	173.0	108.7
Agricultural area	1403.0	3723.6	8093.2	14270.7	27490.4	7424.0	6512.7	6174.5	7379.2
Arable land	548.1	2133.2	5364.1	10285.5	18330.9	6316.6	4013.4	3550.2	4450.6
Cereals	266.6	948.2	2382.0	5416.1	9012.9	3733.4	2059.1	1385.7	1834.7
<i>Common wheat and spelt</i>	95.7	394.9	1227.3	3112.0	4829.9	2026.3	1022.7	758.5	1022.4
<i>Durum wheat</i>	15.7	51.6	105.5	246.1	418.8	300.8	83.6	15.7	18.7
<i>Rye</i>	1.4	5.4	8.2	16.2	31.1	9.6	8.7	7.3	5.6
<i>Barley</i>	33.7	130.7	368.8	1035.6	1568.8	632.0	365.4	269.6	301.8
<i>Oats</i>	5.8	15.0	30.7	48.1	99.6	18.6	31.6	23.4	26.0
<i>Grain maize</i>	95.9	275.6	477.2	735.8	1584.5	655.9	432.5	184.0	312.1
Dried pulses	3.6	20.2	90.9	313.6	428.3	235.1	89.6	50.4	53.2
Root crops	8.7	33.4	112.1	397.0	551.1	336.1	104.9	56.5	53.6
<i>Potatoes</i>	6.1	13.0	33.2	102.3	154.6	93.6	29.1	14.0	17.9
<i>Sugar beet</i>	1.5	17.8	73.5	290.1	382.9	242.3	72.1	37.1	31.4
<i>Fodder root</i>	1.1	2.6	5.4	4.6	13.6	0.2	3.7	5.4	4.3
Industrial crops	68.6	145.4	456.5	1433.3	2103.7	1071.4	515.2	233.9	283.2
<i>Tobacco</i>	0.8	3.1	3.2	2.2	9.3	4.2	3.1	1.0	0.9
<i>Hops</i>	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.0
<i>Cotton</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Rape and turnip</i>	8.2	43.2	206.5	949.5	1207.3	596.9	249.9	152.8	207.8
<i>Sunflower</i>	22.8	80.6	195.1	340.1	638.6	342.1	194.1	54.9	47.5
<i>Soya</i>	2.1	6.4	17.8	30.0	56.3	29.4	17.5	4.9	4.5
Fresh vegetables, melons, strawberry	35.4	50.8	61.4	97.0	244.6	156.5	43.5	16.1	28.4
<i>outside</i>	31.0	49.3	60.6	96.5	237.4	150.2	42.8	16.0	28.3
<i>under glass</i>	4.4	1.5	0.9	0.5	7.2	6.3	0.7	0.1	0.1
Flower and ornamental plants	6.1	0.7	0.5	1.5	8.8	8.0	0.7	0.0	0.1
<i>outside</i>	3.9	0.6	0.4	1.5	6.4	5.8	0.5	0.0	0.1
<i>under glass</i>	2.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.4	2.3	0.1	0.0	0.0
Forage plants	94.4	762.8	1856.7	1848.1	4562.0	121.4	885.4	1611.8	1943.4
Fallow land	63.4	167.3	389.9	745.2	1365.8	622.0	304.9	191.2	247.7
Kitchen garden	6.0	3.0	3.2	1.9	14.2	3.0	7.6	2.3	1.3
Permanent pasture and meadows	488.4	1197.0	2501.8	3855.3	8042.4	169.9	2353.1	2604.7	2914.7
Permanent crops	360.4	390.4	224.1	128.0	1103.0	934.5	138.6	17.3	12.6
Fruit and berry plantation	53.2	62.4	44.9	31.2	191.6	142.2	35.9	6.8	6.7
Citrus plantation	2.0	1.1	0.5	0.2	3.8	2.9	0.8	0.1	0.0
Olive trees	8.1	2.6	1.5	1.5	13.6	11.4	2.0	0.1	0.2
Vineyard	289.2	318.7	172.1	89.5	869.4	756.2	97.7	10.0	5.6
Ratios									
Agricultural area per holding (ha)	6.4	34.1	71.7	164.3	52.1	39.8	32.6	80.5	114.6
Agricultural area... (%)									
... own farmed	64.8	44.5	28.3	17.2	26.6	27.7	38.2	24.9	16.7
... in less favoured or mountain area	45.2	45.7	44.9	43.7	44.4	24.7	54.1	54.1	47.4
... organic farmed	1.3	1.8	2.0	1.5	1.7	0.9	2.2	2.3	1.3
... irrigated	7.8	6.1	5.4	6.5	6.2	13.2	5.3	2.5	3.0

Symbols : not available

0 less than half of the unit or nil

Size of the farm		Agricultural area (ha)				All farms	Livestock (LU)		
		< 20	20 - < 50	50 - < 100	100 =<		0 <- < 50	50 - < 100	100 =<
Total livestock	(1000 LU)	2684.4	4244.1	7936.8	7790.9	22656.1	3074.4	5489.1	14092.7
of which grazing	(%)	26.2	56.4	70.1	81.9	66.4	93.2	94.4	49.7
Grazing livestock	(1000 heads)								
Equidae		149.4	95.1	71.0	62.5	378.0	271.0	59.0	48.0
Bovine animals		733.8	2882.1	7093.4	8405.3	19114.6	2999.5	6548.3	9566.8
Under 1 year		286.7	763.3	1825.3	2296.4	5171.7	643.6	1671.2	2856.9
From 1 to less than 2 years		89.3	425.1	1274.0	1671.9	3460.3	422.5	1116.1	1921.6
Dairy cows		54.9	708.4	1680.7	1439.8	3883.8	625.6	1589.2	1669.1
Other cows		201.6	630.7	1416.8	1895.5	4144.7	896.2	1333.9	1914.6
Other bovine animals 2 years and older		101.4	354.6	896.4	1101.7	2454.2	411.7	837.9	1204.6
Sheep		821.6	1742.5	2847.8	3291.6	8703.6	3355.1	2961.5	2387.0
Goats		211.9	336.6	409.3	334.2	1292.1	725.0	332.3	234.8
Granivores									
Pigs	(1000 heads)	2447.9	3582.4	5476.0	3285.5	14791.8	206.7	471.6	14113.4
Piglets < 20 kg		988.6	1253.8	1958.2	1206.8	5407.3	88.5	183.7	5135.1
Breeding sows		258.4	294.5	449.4	279.2	1281.6	23.1	64.1	1194.3
Other pigs		1200.9	2034.1	3068.4	1799.5	8102.9	95.1	223.8	7784.1
Poultry	(million heads)	92.7	66.1	76.4	47.8	283.2	11.7	17.6	253.8
Broilers		31.4	29.7	39.0	25.2	125.3	7.2	12.6	105.5
Laying hens		37.7	15.5	14.1	9.8	77.1	1.9	2.3	72.9
Other poultry		23.7	21.0	23.3	12.8	80.7	2.6	2.7	75.4
Rabbits, breeding females	(1000 heads)	410.1	194.2	202.2	90.4	896.8	557.1	171.8	167.9
Beehives*	(1000)	708.6	32.9	21.5	11.8	774.7	167.5	4.1	3.1
Average size of herds**									
Equidae	(head/holding)	7.2	8.1	6.4	7.1	7.2	7.4	6.4	7.3
Cattle	(head/holding)	16.5	49.3	92.0	160.1	82.2	27.4	92.6	182.2
Dairy cows	(head/holding)	8.7	25.4	38.1	56.3	37.4	19.3	38.0	56.2
Other cows	(head/holding)	6.4	19.5	34.1	56.1	29.8	12.8	36.2	59.8
Sheep	(head/holding)	34.3	132.9	216.7	296.8	142.0	79.4	265.4	302.5
Goats	(head/holding)	22.8	73.3	101.1	124.2	62.7	46.2	110.9	121.6
Pigs	(head/holding)	207.5	312.0	471.0	503.0	357.0	10.9	64.3	928.4
Breeding sows	(head/holding)	68.8	96.6	116.7	135.1	100.7	6.1	37.2	165.0
Other pigs > 20 kg	(head/holding)	117.2	186.8	276.0	287.6	210.4	5.7	32.7	523.5
Rabbits, breeding females	(head/holding)	17.9	15.9	17.9	15.7	17.2	14.6	18.6	35.5
Laying hens	(1000/holding)	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.1	5.2
Broilers	(1000/holding)	1.1	1.7	2.3	2.8	1.7	0.1	0.9	9.5
Beehives	(hive/holding)	82.0	29.7	27.1	21.7	69.9	35.3	8.9	10.9

Symbols : not available 0 less than half of the unit or nil

* Bees are not taken into account when calculating Livestock Unit, there are 600.1 thousand hives on holdings with 0 LU.

** Number of animals of a given livestock category per holding with this kind of animal.

		Absolute figures			% of total	
		Total	< 1 ESU	>= 1 ESU	< 1 ESU	>= 1 ESU
Regular labour force	(1000 persons)	1142.2	50.5	1091.7	4.4	95.6
Regular labour force	(1000 AWU)	763.2	10.5	752.8	1.4	98.6
Holders	(1000 persons)	474.1	39.3	434.8	8.3	91.7
... at least 65 years old		75.1	18.1	57.0	24.1	75.9
... having another gainful activity		115.1	14.2	100.9	12.3	87.7
Number of holdings	(1000)	567.1	39.8	527.4	7.0	93.0
... producing mainly for own consumption		:	:	:	:	:
... producing mainly for direct sales		:	:	:	:	:
... using a tractor		513.3	23.6	489.7	4.6	95.4
Standard Gross Margin (SGM)	(1000 ESU)	28583.7	23.6	28560.1	0.1	99.9
Agricultural area	(1000 ha)	27590.9	100.5	27490.4	0.4	99.6
... owned farmed		7392.3	82.0	7310.3	1.1	98.9
Livestock	(1000 LU)	22703.1	47.0	22656.1	0.2	99.8

Symbols : not available 0 less than half of the unit or nil

► METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The 2005 survey on the structure of agricultural holdings in France was carried out between October 2005 and April 2006 on a sample basis. The previous full-scale agricultural census was conducted in 2000. Since 2003 the results also include the overseas departments. The reference period of the survey was the crop year ending on 31 October 2005. However, in the case of the livestock, the reference date is the day of the interview.

The target population was the holdings producing agricultural goods, reaching a certain threshold (in terms of land area, number of livestock or volume of production) and independently run. These holdings were drawn from an updated permanent sampling frame. The frame was stratified by type of farming and economic size. For each department (NUTS 3) an exhaustiveness threshold (generally 250 ESU) was defined to ensure all units with greatest importance were included; these holdings were inserted into a separate stratum. Generally 20 strata (in Brittany 24) were defined in addition to the special ones. In the strata, random sampling with Neyman-allocation was applied based on SGM, or in some cases based on utilised agricultural area. In each department (NUTS 3) the number of holdings drawn varied between 300 and 1200, depending on the importance and diversity of agriculture. The sample size was 86 126 units (of which 4 081 were in the overseas departments).

For each activity ('entreprise') on a farm (for instance wheat, dairy cow or vineyard), a standard gross margin (SGM) is estimated, based on the area (or the number of heads) and a regional coefficient. The sum of such margins in a farm is its economic size, expressed in European Size Units (ESU). 1 ESU is equal to 1200 euros.

Each farm is classified in the community typology by its economic size and its type of farming, depending on the share of each enterprise in its economic size. For instance, a farm where breeding sows account for more than 2/3 of the economic size, is classified as *specialist pig rearing* (type 5011). Depending on the level of aggregation, farms are grouped into 8 to 70 types.

Annual work unit (AWU) is equivalent to a worker employed on a full time basis for one year. In France it is 1603 hours (229 working days of 7 working hours per day).

Livestock Unit (LU) is equivalent to a dairy cow. The number of animals (number of heads) is converted into LU using a set of coefficients reflecting the feed requirements of the different animal categories. The LU coefficients used by EUROSTAT are different from those of France.

Subsistence farming refers here to all farms below 1 ESU economic size. Note that the number of farms cannot be compared between countries due to the differences in coverage of FSS.

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National Methodological Report – FSS 2005 (available on request)

Further information:

Data: [EUROSTAT Website/Theme: Agriculture and Fisheries/Data](#)

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